

RIVAL CANDIDATES.

On the station platform at desolate Xerxes Junction stood two impatient men. The big lumbering, round-faced man was Colonel Joe Layson; the thin, sallow one was Henry Clay Finley. It was campaign time, and the twain were "swinging around the circle." Colonel Layson as the candidate of the "Ours" for Governor and Finley as the spellbinder paid to extol the merits of his party's standard bearer.

The afternoon train was to stop at Xerxes Junction and take on passengers for Ardenia was late, and the rough old colonel began to swear as he studied his watch.

"I'll be here in a minute, Governor," said Finley, soothingly, carefully observing the custom of addressing candidates by the title to which they aspire.

A scrawny, bent-over old woman, carrying an apronful of wood, came out of the clump of trees across the railroad track and limped along until she reached the platform where she stopped and looked up into the colonel's face with vacant-eyed curiosity. Finley was shocked.

"Such beastly manners!" he exclaimed. "Shall I order her to be off, Governor?"

Before the colonel could answer, the old woman clambered upon the platform and limped eagerly to his side.

"Be you the guv'nor?" she asked.

The colonel smiled a big, hearty smile, and answered: "That's what they call me."

"Won't you pardon my boy? He's servin' five years in Osborn prison. The old man's been sick abed for months and I ain't able to work, and we're nearly starvin'. Pardon the boy won't you, guv'nor? I wanted to go down to the capital a year ago when they took Dannie away, but I had no money and I couldn't walk that far."

The colonel raised his finger and seemed about to explain, but the woman talked on piteously:

"They say he stole a cow for Halder, the cattle king that lives down at Belden. Maybe you him. I don't believe Dannie did any stealin', but if he did, guv'nor, it wouldn't be right rushin' him off to prison and leave old Halder free and still hirin' folks' boys to steal cattle for him."

"It doesn't seem right, for a fact," admitted the colonel.

"But, good woman," interrupted Finley, "there was certainly no evidence against Mr. Halder, or surely the majesty of the law would have been sustained and he, too, would have suffered the punishment of the transgressor."

"I don't catch all your fine words, mister, but I know Dan's in prison and Halder is guilty. Fine words can't get round them facts."

"Well put," chuckled the colonel. "Finley, it would be a good scheme if you'd talk English once in a while."

The woman looked puzzled a moment but the colonel's face was kindly, and throwing down her bundle of wood, she dropped on her knees before him.

"Please pardon my boy, guv'nor. The old man and me'll die before spring if you don't. It won't hurt you to pardon him."

He ain't no dangerous crim'nal. Anybody round here'll tell you Dannie Higgs was never before the judge till this time. He's all the child I got left, guv'nor. Don't keep him from me."

The colonel helped Mrs. Higgs to her feet and led her to a bench just outside the door of the little telegraph office. All the while he was thinking deeply. He was the candidate of the "Ours" for Governor; the "ins" had a natural majority of 50,000 votes; Governor John Randall, with a good official record to back him, was up for re-election, and Colonel Joe Layson had as much chance of becoming Governor as he had of gaining the throne of Turkey. He had revolved the situation in his mind, and as he found his inspiration Mrs. Higgs started to rise, but he waved her back, saying: "Just wait there, madam, until I send a message and get an answer. I'm going to investigate this matter at once."

Finley whistled, but the colonel only frowned and stalked into the telegraph office. For perhaps two minutes he wrote steadily. When he had finished he hurriedly gathered up the satisfactory sheets and slammed them down on the operator's table.

"Here, my man," he commanded, "send this in a big hurry."

The operator looked up sleepily, rubbed his eyes and read:

"To Hon. John Randall, executive mansion, Eagleton:

"My Dear Governor—I'm running against you, and you know it's only for exercise, and I want you to help me out in a case that has nothing to do with politics. I've got an old woman here who takes me for you and wants me to pardon her son. It would be a shame to 'undecieve her, and, anyway, I'm better looking than you are. The boy's name is Dan Higgs. He was sent up for five years for cattle stealing. His father is sick, and both father and mother are starvin'. Pardon the boy for me, John. I never envied you your job until this minute, and even now I want it only long enough to pardon a cow stealer. Answer at once. I'll wait here at this junction until I hear from you."

"JOSEPH LAYSON."

It was the longest and by far the oddest telegram known in Xerxes Junction. The operator looked dubious and timidly suggested, "You might skeletonize this and save money."

"No, sir," said the colonel, decidedly. "Send every blamed word of it. This is a matter of state."

The operator labored with the message while the colonel went out on the platform to tell Mrs. Higgs to wait patiently. Soon after the message gone over the wires the Ardenia train came puffing in.

"Come on, Governor," said Finley. "We can't wait any longer."

"I can't leave just now," answered the colonel, leaning languidly against the station door.

"But you must. We speak in Ardenia tonight."

"You can make enough noise for both of us."

"Ardenia counts on hearing you, Governor," urged Finley. "A willful disappointment like this might ruin your chances of election."

"You know I never had any,

Finley. What's the use of saying that? Anyhow, I'm not going."

With that he took a seat on the bench beside Mrs. Higgs.

"You'd better be moving, Finley," he added, "I'll join you at Beedsburg in the morning."

Just then the operator came rushing out with a message. The colonel seized it, almost tearing it in half in his eagerness, then held the pieces in his hands while he read:

"Dear Colonel—Have telephoned to warden at Osborn. No objection there. Higgs' pardon signed this minute. Glad to be of service."

JOHN RANDALL

The colonel turned to Mrs. Higgs.

"It's all right," he said thickly. "Your boy will be home tomorrow."

"Thank you, thank you. You're the best guv'nor God ever made." At this she broke down and sobbed.

"All aboard," shouted the conductor.

The colonel took a step toward the train. It's all right," he repeated. "If you feel grateful tell the boy to vote for me, John Randall, for Governor."—St. Louis World.

Letter to Mr. D. B. Kendrick. Monroe City, Mo.

Dear Sir: Whether you own your house or not, is no matter. If not, your interest in it, as a tenant, is quite enough to justify what we are going to say, and a tenant can make his interest felt by the owner. You get better boarders, and better prices in a prosperous looking house than a shabby one; and a leading part of the difference between the two is paint.

No doubt, your table is known; it brings you boarders and money. No doubt, your house is clean; that brings you boarders and money. No doubt you maintain a certain manner among your boarders by choosing them well; and that brings you boarders and money.

Now add to all these a nice-looking house, outside and in, and you have an additional force upon people, who have no homes of their own. It pays well or ill to keep boarders, according as one selects them or has to take those that come.

We refer to these obvious thoughts for the sake of advising you how to paint; Devoe Ready Paint.

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Yours truly, F. W. DEVOE & Co.

For Sale or Exchange

A stock of general merchandise in good shape and well located; reason is bad health. Call on or address Greenlawn Postmaster.

One of the best known instances of churches with streets through them is that of St. John the Baptist's church, in Bristol. The church is situated right over the ancient gateway into the city on the Avon, and the towering spire, standing high above the neighboring houses and streets, is a remarkable sight, as one surveys it from the roadway below.—Post Dispatch.

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John L. Owen & Co. are going to do away with all credit business and sell meats for cash, as in this way they will not have to make the people who do pay, pay for the meat of those who do not pay.

Nine Hole.

James G. Blaine's benchman, with his "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion," put Blaine in the nine hole. Joseph Wingate Folk with his "Thieves, Thugs and Tricksters," has turned the tide of Democracy against him. One lost, and the other will deservedly go down.

For good laundry work take your linen to J. E. Christian agent for Congers Laundry and Dye Works.

Get There

The Valley Weekly says: "Mr. Harry B. Hawes has challenged Mr. Joseph W. Folk to debate with him." Mr. Folk might answer by referring to Nehemiah, sixth chapter, first four verses.—Madison Times.

The Times is inclined to play with fire. We would refer it to I. Kings, 20. And then say don't, for Joey is anything but a Moses, except in not seeing the promised land.

Monuments.

Before buying that monument for the grave of a departed friend see Thomas & Shearman. They will make the price and you will be pleased with their work.

Some People.

Think the metropolitan papers are glad to have a war or other big things on hand, so as to fill up on news. The reverse is the case. During the Spanish-Cuban-American war, the war news cost several of the American papers from \$800 to \$1,800 per day. A column in an average metropolitan paper carries from 1,600 to 1,800 words. The news from the Russian-Japanese war is costing those papers \$505 for a 1,000 words, which is a little less than two-thirds of a column. How long would you want to foot the bill.

Dr. W. W. Ritchey's address is 2710 Prospect Ave., Kansas City, Mo.

Sporadic Soup Houses.

They are holding "hard times," parties in Chicago to assist the neighborhood poor, and in Cincinnati one wealthy citizen has opened free soup houses for the unemployed. As a matter of fact we should say that so far as they have any significance at all, it is of a decidedly local and rather ordinary character; but if only a free trade party were in power and a low tariff in force, there would be no measuring the noise that would be made over these little incidents.—From the Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

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